Sick Public Sector enterprises

*215. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether out of 48 Public Sector Enterprises, 26 have been declared sick and referred to BIFR; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to revamp the Public Sector Enterprises by using the disinvestment proceeds?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Yes sir.

(b) Funds for revamping and restructuring of Public Sector Enterprises are allocated out of Consolidated Fund of India to which the Disinvestment proceeds are credited.

Patent of Indian Curry

*216. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an application for patenting the Indian curry by adding traditional Indian spices has been submitted to the patent office in Japan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government would like to contest such patent applications whereby applicants want to draw monopoly rights of the traditional cooking process; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) As per information available, no application entitled "Indian Curry by additing tradit onal Indian spices" is reported to have been filed in the patent Office in Japan. However, a Japanese company, namely, House Food Corporation has reportedly filed an application for grant of a patent entitled "Cooking of Curry" in the Japanese Patent Office. The application was filed on 28th April, 1994 and the same was published on 7th November, 1995.

(c) and (d) Patents are granted by respective Governments under their Patents laws. Whenever, information is received about the

patents being taken on certain products which are not considered patentable, steps are taken to assess whether the grant of patent can be challenged.

Inclusion of 'Navsudra' Caste of Bengali Refugees in SC Category

†*217. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question No. 1309 given in the Rajya Sabha on 8th June, 1998 and state whether Government would take measures to include 'Navsudra caste' of Bengali refugees in Scheduled Caste immediately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): The matter is being examined in consultation with Government of Uttar Pradesh and the Registrar General of India in the light of modalities approved by the Cabinet Committee on Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Minorities on 15.06.1999. No time can be specified as proposals are received from time to time and processed in accordance with prescribed procedure.

Performance of Steel Plants under SAIL

*218. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all steel plants under Steel Authority of India are incurring huge losses for the past few years;

(b) if so, the plant-wise performance during the last three years and the reasons for huge losses; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to improve the performance of the steel plants in the country?

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† Original Notice of the question was received in Hindi.